

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 136*Senate Judiciary Committee**13 March 2007**Presented by:**Brigadier General Stan R. Putnam**Asst Adjutant General, Army**Department of Military Affairs**On Behalf of:**Major General Randy Mosley**The Adjutant General*

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for the record my name is Brigadier General Stan R. Putnam, the Assistant Adjutant General for the Montana Army National Guard. I appear here today on behalf of Major General Randall D. Mosley, the Adjutant General, who is currently out of State.

House Bill 136 is a bill to establish a death gratuity payment benefit paid to the survivor of a National Guardsman who is killed while performing State Active Duty. Under current law there is no provision for any form of death gratuity for National Guardsmen performing State Active Duty, even though we ask them to step forward in times of emergency and perform dangerous tasks in support of their fellow citizens.

The survivors of a service member who dies while performing federally funded duty, are provided a \$100,000 death gratuity, the intent of which is to assist survivors during their period of readjustment, and cover immediate travel and funeral expenses.

The Soldier's and Airmen of the Montana National Guard, have been serving around the World over the past two years, protecting our freedom and way of life. The Soldier's and Airmen of the Montana National Guard, have been serving on State Active Duty all across Montana protecting our citizenry and property. Montana Guardsmen have served on fire lines, rescued flood victims, assisted during blizzards, and have manned prisons and state hospitals. These are Montana's Best, stepping forward not only to protect our freedom and way of life from foreign threats, but protecting Montanan's at home as well. To date, no Montana National Guardsman has ever died while on State Active Duty. At the same time, we owe them a debt of gratitude, we owe them the piece of mind, and we owe them the courtesy of this small death gratuity in the event of their death.

On behalf of the Soldier's and Airmen, The Department of Military Affairs, stands strongly in support of House Bill No 136, and asks for your support.